

# FOR THE *KID IN YOU*

Newspapers  
In Education

## A right to vote

The race is on for the White House. This fall, American voters select the leader for our nation. Every four years, citizens over the age of 18 vote for our president. However, it has not always been that way.

From colonial times through the American Revolution (1787), only white men who owned property voted. In the 1820s, people called for a vote by all white men. Voting came to be seen as a political right of citizenship.

African-American men gained the right to vote with the 15th Amendment in 1870. However few actually voted until after the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

Women won the right to vote through the 19th Amendment in 1920.

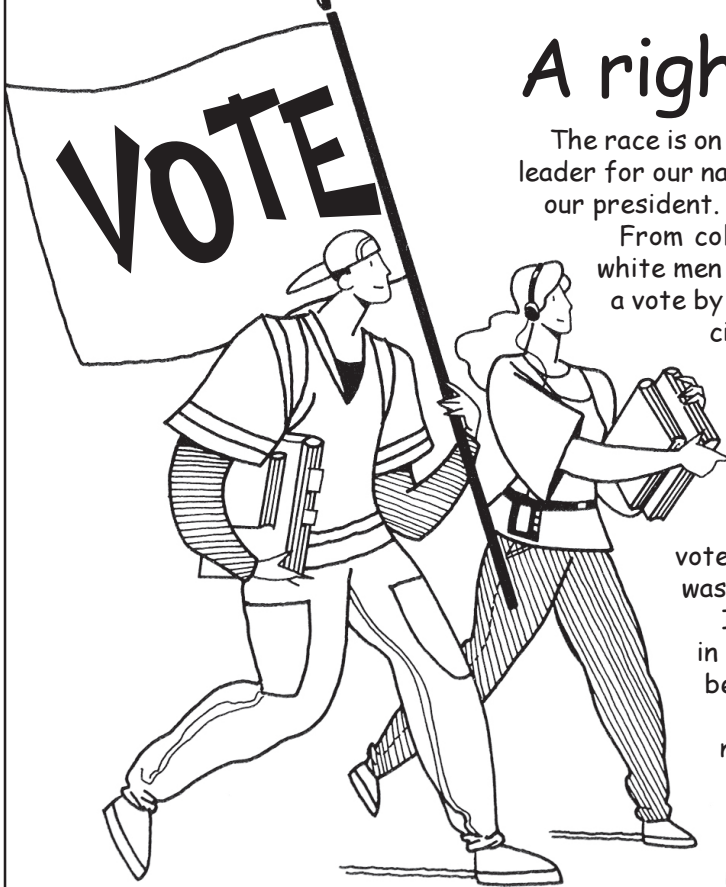
The 26th Amendment, passed in 1971, gave the right to vote to anyone over the age of 18. Before that, the voting age was generally 21.

In 1941, millions of men too young to vote were sent to fight in World War II. "Old enough to fight, old enough to vote" became a slogan.

The issue gained strength in the 1960s during the Vietnam War. In 1969, Congress voted down resolutions to lower the voting age. In 1970, U.S. President Richard Nixon gave his support. Congress lowered the voting age to 18 in federal and state elections.

President Nixon signed the bill. However, he feared that it might be unconstitutional. The U.S. Supreme Court decided that Congress could give 18-year-olds a national vote, but that states set voting qualifications in state and local elections.

Congress passed the 26th Amendment in March 1971 to solve the problem. The Amendment lowered the voting age to 18 in all elections. In June, Ohio became the 38th state to ratify the amendment, making it law. That was the fastest ratification of any constitutional amendment in U.S. history.



Unscramble these names of states

H A M A L O O K

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N I C H M A G I

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W N E K O R Y

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H O O I

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T E R V O M N

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W A O I

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R E G O G I A

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D A R Y M A N L

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### Classroom activity

**Your election journal:** Create a political journal that you will maintain through the Presidential elections. Search your newspaper for any political articles or ads. Place these articles in your journal. Also include any local election information you find.

**Discussion:** Ask your parents or another adult how they decide who to vote for in an election. Ask when they first voted for president.